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FROM THE MOUNTAIN SIDE LOOKING SOUTH



LYRICS
OF
Lake and Stream

ILLUSTRATED

By G. W. LLOYD

BRANCHVILLE
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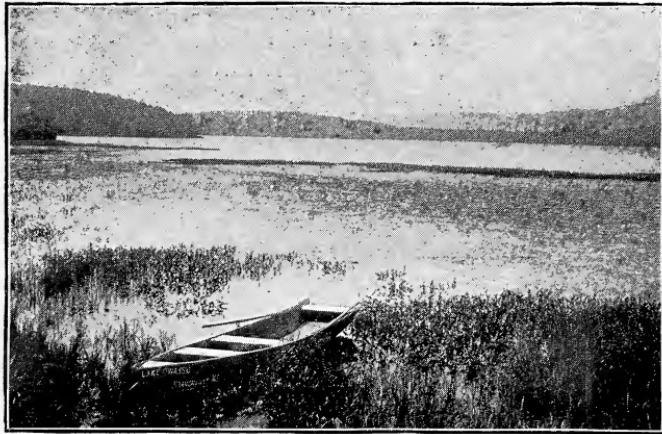
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LAKE OWASSA

Lenno and Owassa.

AN INDIAN IDYL.

In the deepening gloom of the forest,
Near the Susquehanna shore,
A band of Lenapè Indians,
At the call of their sagamore,

Round the council fire were gathered;
A menace and presage of death
Scowled in their stolid features,
And snarled in their brutish breath.

They were trying one of their tribesmen,
A young and stalwart brave,
With cowardice charged and fore-branded—
No Indian crime so grave.

The tribe had planned an invasion
Of the northern Cayuga land,
And Lenno refused with decision
To follow the raiding band.

Thus he spake: “On aggressive war-path
I never again will go,
Nor against unoffending brothers
Lift hatchet or draw the bow.

“I have listened to David Brainard
As he told of the white man’s God,
How he took the form of the human,
And with weary footsteps trod

“The soil that man, in his madness,
Has drenched with his brother’s gore,
Preaching his peace-evangel,
That men should battle no more—

“How foes in their anger slew Him,
For the loving words He said,
And how, in His might triumphant,
He rose again from the dead.

“My heart was touched, I surrendered,
And I am a Christian now,
The waters of holy baptism
Have sealed my unchanging vow.

“So never again, aggressive,
On the war-path will I go,
Or against peace-loving neighbors
Lift hatchet, or bend the bow.”

He ended, and self-convicted,
His judges he calmly eyed,
His arms on his broad breast folded,
Well knowing how they'd decide.

“Squaw!” sneered a chief in derision;
“Death!” in chorus cried all;
“We shall see if your God will save you,
When for mercy on Him you call.”

Then the sachem uttered the sentence:
“Bind him fast to yon withered tree
Till sun-rise, then kill him by torture.
I have spoken; 'tis my decree.”

To the withered tree they bound him,
On the verge of a thicket deep,
Then each repaired to his wigwam
And speedily sank to sleep.

Poor Lenno! No wonder he slept not;
He was pained by the stringent thong;
But he raised his heart to the Christ-God,
Imploring redress of his wrong.

“Hist!” said a breath behind him,
On a sudden his limbs were free,
He strained his eyes in the darkness,
But face nor form could he see.

Then a hand touched his so lightly
He thought it a ghost might be,
And he heard a zephyr-like whisper:
“Quick, Lenno, and follow me!”

Down through the thicket he followed,
Till they’d passed a mile or more
From the wigwams of the sleepers,
And stood on the river shore.

The moon had now risen, revealing
His friend in the lambent light;
And he shook with a mingled tremor,
Half terror and half delight;

For there stood the lovely Owassa,
The sagamore’s daughter and pride,
Whom Lenno adored in secret,
Hopeless to claim her his bride.

“Owassa, my darling,” he faltered,
“ ‘Tis a perilous thing you have done!”
“Hush! hush!” she replied, “ ‘tis nothing;
 You must finish what I have begun.

“Your escape may be early discovered,
 Your life be the cost of delay;
This canoe to your flight will add fleetness—”
 She pointed to where it lay.

“The braves sleep lightly: strong water
 They’ve not touched since the day arose.
Your trail they may now be seeking,
 Which the moonlight will surely disclose.

“Listen! I hear the dead branches
 Crackling under their tread;
Hurry, O hurry, dear Lenno,
 And escape thy doom so dread!”

Said he, “I will do thy bidding,
 But I will not go alone,
For life without thee has no value,
 So dear to me art thou grown.

“Come, and we’ll brave together
 This turbulent stream to the tide;
We will seek the saintly Brainard
 And he shall make thee my bride.”

As he spoke came nearer and nearer
The sound of the plunging host;
No time for debate or endearment,
A moment more and they're lost.

So, blushing and silent, Owassa
Stepped with him into the boat,
Which, thanks to his strength and alertness,
Was soon in the current afloat.

The spiteful twanging of bow-strings
Gave proof that the foe was nigh;
The yell of the savages smote them,
And the arrows began to fly.

Here the river, though rough, was friendly,
And bore them beyond the sweep
Of the shower of deadly missiles,
For the current was broad and deep.

Lenno flung back his defiance
And waved them a scoffing adieu,
Then steered round a headland, thus hiding
His maddened pursuers from view.

And bravely did Lenno wrestle
With the rapids and rocks on their way,
Till they reached the quiet waters
At the head of Chesapeake Bay.

Then over the land he carried
The skiff to the Delaware;
For love gave strength to his sinews,
And surely his Christ was there.

And the smile of Owassa cheered him,
As he paddled over the tide
For the Jersey shore and the preacher
Who would make the brave girl his bride.

They found the good man at Crosswick,
And a welcome warm to his cot;
And the youth and maiden were wedded
In that consecrated spot.

Many moons they tarried in hiding,
For Brainard had deemed it best—
Learning to read the Gospels,
Happy as birds in their nest.

And the heart of Owassa opened
To the light that shone from above,
Thus earthly ties were strengthened
By the bond of a higher love.

But a sense of peril impending
Invaded their peace of mind,
And a refuge in some seclusion
More distant they longed to find.

For Owassa, the sachem's daughter,
Was known through the Lenapè land,
And many had sought, unavailing,
To win the young beauty's hand.

Brainard had known of a region,
Far to the north away,
Where the foot of Indian or white man
Had never been known to stray.

Tradition, hoary and dateless,
A story of terror told,
That the scene was devil-haunted,
And, be he never so bold,

The keenest hunter halted
A league at least from the place,
Lest the Evil One should seize him
And finish his earthly race.

So one summer eve at nightfall,
With Brainard their zealous guide,
They set forth to find the asylum
Where in safety they might abide.

They followed the gleam of the Pole-star,
And rested in covert by day,
Lest haply some human sleuth-hound
Should cunningly dog their way.

Kind heaven the fugitives guided
And guarded their ranging feet,
Till, with gladdened hearts, they discovered
A fair embowered retreat

Deep in the virgin forest,
Close to the mountain side,
Where Indian had never ventured,
Nor white man's vision pried.

A lovely lakelet mirrored
The scene in its placid deep,
The maple and hemlock branches
And the rocky mountain steep.

The fish leaped out of the water,
The deer through the boscage sprang,
They heard the coo of the wood dove,
The catbird and robin sang

What seemed like a song of welcome
To the wanderers' charmed ears,
And they cherished the thought with gladness,
And flung to the wind their fears.

Good Brainard helped them to settle
In their simple Indian style,
Then bade them farewell with his blessing,
And said, in a little while

He would come and make them a visit,
Or a trusty messenger send;
But the Master called His servant
To Himself ere the autumn's end.

Thus the exiles lived on, unwitting
Of the fate of the Lenapè braves,
Who went to fight the Cayugas,
And filled three hundred graves;

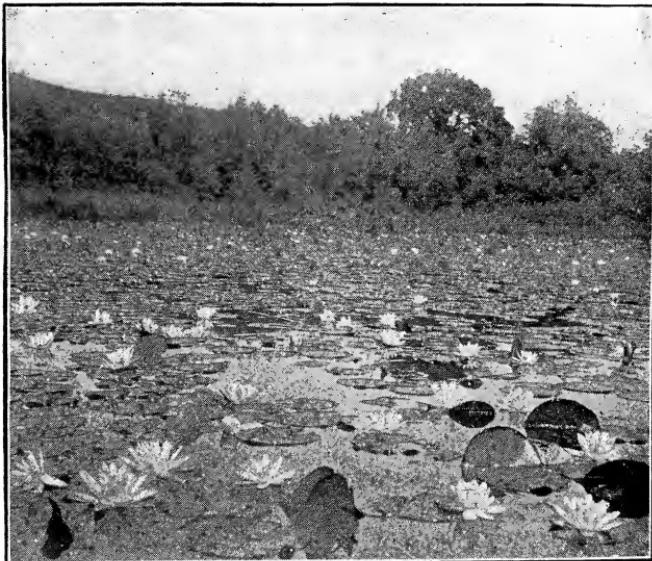
While those who escaped were scattered
Far over the Western Plain,
And the wilds of the Susquehanna
Ne'er rang with their shouts again.

The Indian's wants are simple,
And here they were well supplied—
Abundance of game in the forest,
And fish in the lake beside;

Wild cereals grew in the marshes,
And roots that were good for food,
And esculent herbs were plenty
In the openings of the wood.

Clothing was amply provided
By the creatures of the wild;
So these wards of nature were happy,
And their lives were undefiled

As the lilies that gemmed the lakelet,
As the flowers that graced the sod,
As the primal pair in the Garden,
Ere they sinned against their God.



LAKE OWASSA—WHERE THE LILIES GROW

For down in their hearts they cherished
The faith and hope they had learned
At the feet of the holy Brainard,
And love on its altar burned

With a pure and reverent fervor,
Unknown in the gilded fane,
To Him who had died to save them,
And forfeited heaven regain.

Thus the years rolled on serenely,
With little to mark their flight,
Save that two small Indian maidens
Made the forest home more bright.

But clouds will darken the sunshine,
And night will follow the day,
And the heart will be sad to-morrow
That now is happy and gay.

And such was the lot of Lenno,
Who saw the splendor pale
In the lovely eyes of Owassa,
And the lissome footsteps fail.

His brave heart sank within him
With a boding, shuddering fear,
That her days on earth were numbered,
And the parting very near.

Alas! it did not tarry;
She reeled and tottered one day,
And Lenno had scarcely caught her,
Ere her sweet soul passed away.

And though his heart was breaking
For his loss beyond repair,
He thanked the Lord that his darling
Was forever safe in His care.

So he made her grave on the margin
Of the lake, and, with loving care,
Lined her sleeping-place with mosses,
And tenderly laid her there.

Then calling his motherless children
With sobbing voice to his side,
And looking his last on the bower
He had built for his vanished bride,

He bore them away through the forest,
Seeking the haunts of men,
Making for Crosswick, hoping
To find his good friend again.

He was not there, but his spirit
Remained like a kindly wraith,
And Lenno was hailed as a brother,
A partner of Brainard's faith.

In time, he sowed the evangel
'Mong the tribes of the wandering foot,
And brought to the Master's garner
Rich harvests of precious fruit.

The little forest maidens,
Cultured and debonair,
Graced the homes of worthy husbands,
With connubial virtues rare.

Sleeps well the dust of Owassa,
The gentle Indian dame,
On the shore of the woodland water
That bears her beautiful name.



CULVER LAKE FROM CULVERMERE LAWN

Beautiful Culver.

Vision of beauty, rare gem of the hills,
Nestling in verdure, endued by the rills,
Fringed with dim woodland, o'erarched by the blue,
Changeful in mood as chameleon's hue.

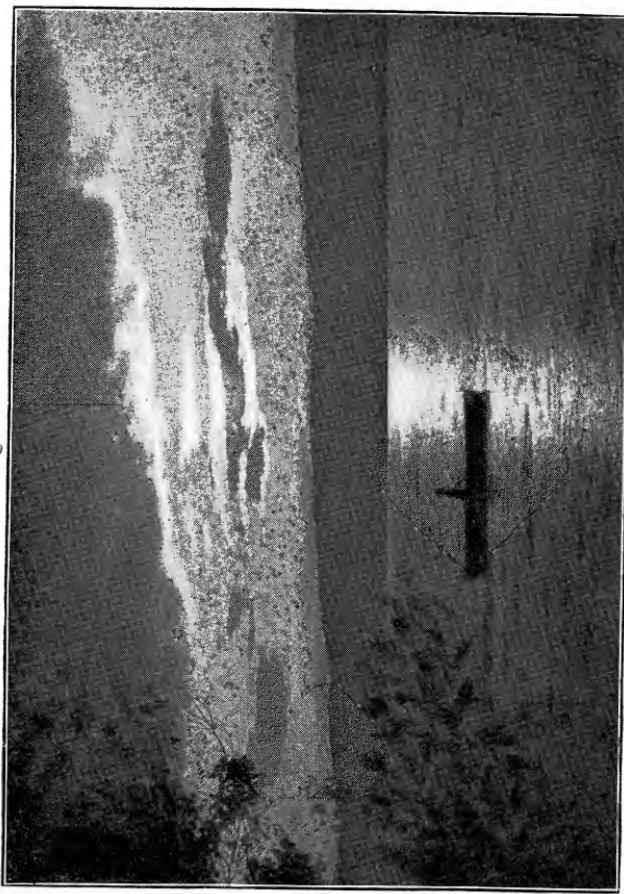
Foes of serenity, worry and fret,
Mar not thy sweetness with billowy pet;
Tiniest, sunniest wavelets—no more—
Plash with the gentlest of ripples on shore.

Gleefully carol the warbler and thrush,
Swinging on tree-top or perching on bush;
Merrily flit the gay sprites of the air
Hither and thither and everywhere.

Balmy the ether, delicious the breeze,
Breath of the mountain top fluttering the trees;
Nimbler for thee the dull life-current flows,
Weariness, child-like, is lulled to repose.

Laughing in ecstasy, rippling with fun,
Toying with cloudlet, caressing the sun;
Glassing the sky in thy hyaline breast,
Whelming yon steep from foundation to crest—

Limit there's none to thy versatile ways,
Charming, more charming the longer I gaze;
Glad are the eyes which the fair vision fills,
Beautiful Culver, the joy of the hills.



MOONLIGHT ON CULVER LAKE

On Culver's Moonlit Water.

A youth and a maiden sat in a skiff
 On Culver's moonlit water;
He was as bold as young Lochinvar,
 She fair as Eve's fairest daughter.

He meant to tell her the old, old tale,
 On the lake so calm and stilly,
But he never thought that he'd have to do
 The rowing, willy-nilly.

And there he sat a-tugging the oars,
 And she in the stern so pensive;
He, sorely befogged and down in the dumps,
 Tremblingly apprehensive.

And the maiden—ah, how little he dreamed
 She was full of a fellow-feeling,
Till the moon shone full on her sweet young face,
 Her inmost heart revealing.

Then a thought flashed into the fertile brain
 Of the youth—love's pure invention—
And he pulled for the nearest point of land,
 Not breathing of his intention.

Soon reaching a glade where the bushes part,
 And the kine come down to water,
He handed her out, she willing as he,
 And then in his arms he caught her.

Old rock-ribbed Kittatinny glowered,
 The fishes thrilled with laughter,
And the moon looked wise, as if she knew
 The fun that was coming after.

Then over her face she drew a cloud,
 Flimsy as gossamer veiling;
The stars at each other slyly winked,
 And toward the West kept sailing.

Meanwhile the pair sat down on the grass,
 And said he, "Love, this is sweeter
Than sitting apart in yonder skiff,
 With its crazy, wobbling teeter."

She laughed a rippling, silvery laugh,
 And said, "I can show you a better
And brighter invention than yours by far,
 And make you, confessed, my debtor.

"I've discovered," she said, "that rowing alone
Is senseless toil and bother,
So we'll sit together, you take one oar,
And I will take the other."

He clapped his hands with a wild delight,
And gave her an ardent pressing;
Then they boarded the skiff, each took an oar,
He her keener wit confessing.

He clasped her closely, and she clasped him,
And as one they pulled together,
Declaring no boatman alone, so well
A pair of oars could feather.

Now they're pulling together on wedlock's waves,
This youth and Eve's fair daughter—
But every summer their fad renew
By moonlight on Culver's water.



CULVERBROOK AT THE FOOT OF THE GLEN

Culverbrook.

Hear that delirious, chattering brook
Yon fluttering shadows among!
This Breakneck Glen seems the queerest nook
For the wag of so merry a tongue.

Is a bevy of Naiads listening there?
Or do wood-nymphs haunt the scene?
I'm longing to lay the mystery bare,
So I'll plunge through this tangle green,

And interview the talkative minx,
As she glides down the rocky shed;
But mayhap she'll play the part of the Sphinx,
And reel off a riddle instead.

“Good morning, fair truant! what do you here?
Whence come you? whither away?
Your name, your kindred, your birth-place, my dear—
Tell me all your story, I pray.”

“My story? ha, ha!” laughs the babbling beck,
“If you want to hear it, you may;
I shall tell it, whether or no you reck
To listen to what I say.

“But your questions—my! what a heap they are!
Six jumbled together in one!
They’re enough to take my breath away,
Who am used to chatter for fun.

“Yet, since you’re so kind as to call on me,
I’ll answer them, brief as I can;
Though the ‘all’ you ask of my history
Would use up the life of a man.

“Name, I had none for centuries long,
‘The Branch’ was the term they used
To note me, a thousand branches among.
Do you wonder I felt abused?

“Yon trig little village that snuggles below,
At the foot of her sheltering hills,
Would you believe it? my name does not know,
Though I drive the wheels of her mills.

“At length a poet wandered this way,
And gave me my family name;
‘Sweet Culverbrook!’ he was wont to say,
‘Your sweetness is better than fame.’



BRANCHVILLE

"I was born at the foot of yon steepy mount—
Kittatinny with frowning head;
Fair Culver's water my being's fount,
On her breast my young life was fed.

"My grandsire flourished ten thousand years
Ago, in quaternary time,
A gelid old monarch, whose realm appears
To have covered the Arctic clime.

"He had many sons; they were giants tall—
Glaciers, icebergs, towering grand;
And he sent them southward, trooping all,
To conquer the southern land.

"One of them scaled yonder mountain height,
And leveled its lofty cap;
Nor paused in the elemental fight
Till he'd carved out Culver's Gap.

"The last deed this doughty giant wrought,
Was delving the cozy retreat
Where my mother and little Owassa sought
A rest for their weary feet.

"But the home was too narrow and pent for me;
I had heard of the wide, wide world;
I had heard of the deep and boundless sea,
Whose waters are tempest-hurled

"Into sapphire billows and pearly foam,
On whose crest the storm-birds ride;
So I left my limited mountain home,
In search of the limitless tide.

"You marvel I've chosen to make my way
Down this darkling solitude;
But I love it no less than the solar ray,
When it suits my varying mood.

“As a maiden hies to her quiet bower,
From the glare of the festal scene,
So I haste from the Day-King’s fervid power
To this tempered shade serene.

“I am told, not far from this dim defile,
I shall enter broad meadows fair,
Where myriad blossoms in beauty smile,
And sweet odors fill the air.

“My cousin Paulina* awaits me there,
Who will lovingly lead the way
Down her emerald valley to Delaware,
And thence to his tidal bay.

“On, on together we’ll merrily go,
And wonderful sights will view,
Till we hail at last with a glad hallo
The billowy ocean blue.”

“Silly brook!” I responded, “can’t you see,
Ere you reach that limitless main,
You will hopelessly lose your identity,
And never come back again?”

“Ah, there you are wrong,” said the wilful jade.
“I have studied science, you see;
You don’t know as much as I, I’m afraid,
And you’re too pessimistic for me.

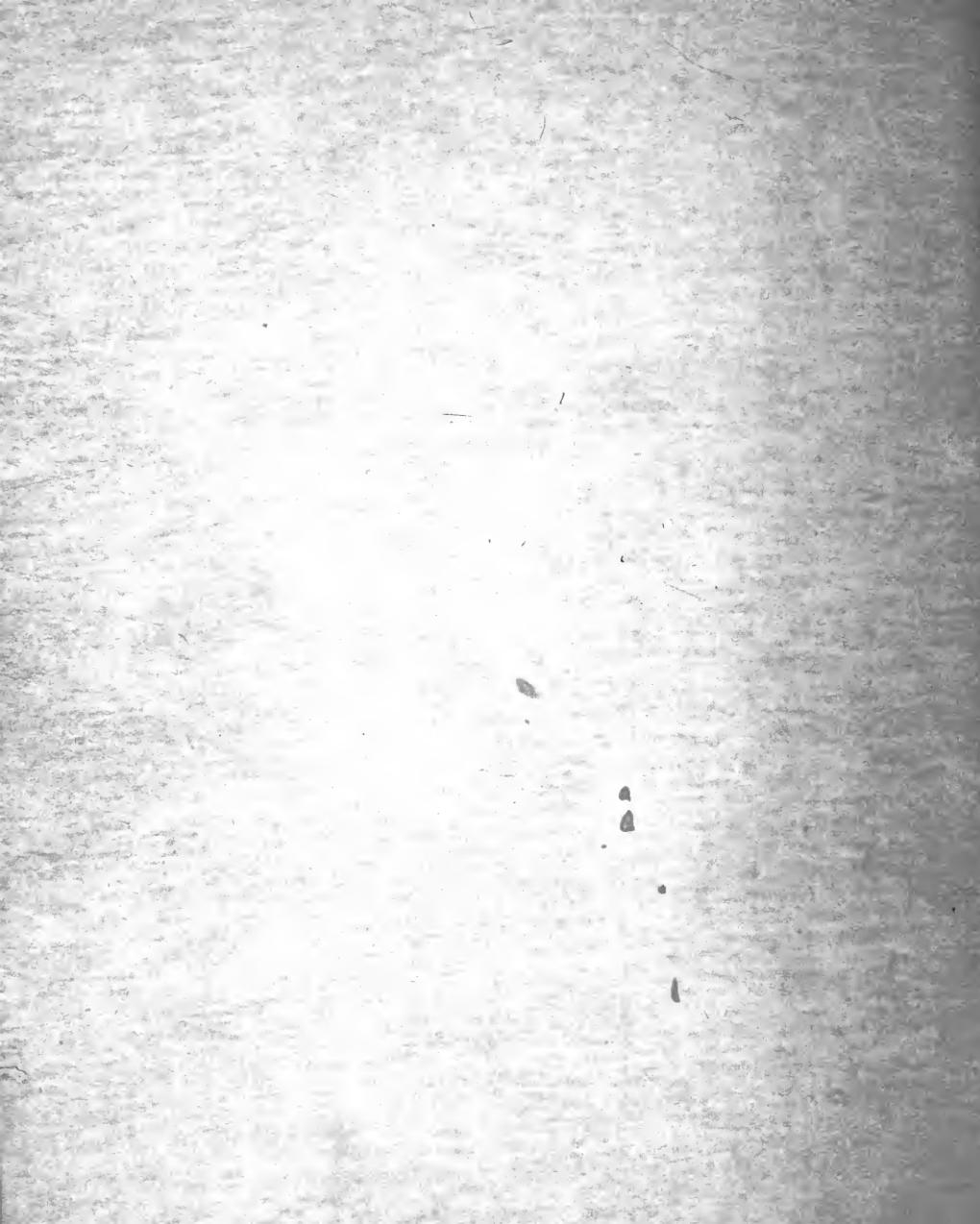
*Paulinskll.

"Why, I may return in some cloud—who knows?—
In a year or less, and then,
Should I spill a drop on your upturned nose,
Perhaps you will know me again!"

Amused at this funny and vague conceit
Of the brook's philosophy,
I left her, thinking: Ne'er was so sweet
And jolly a creature as she.

Is this true, or something I dreamed about?
Never mind; whether one or the other,
I gained my end by ferreting out
The drift of the streamlet's pother.

And whenever a rain-drop pats my nose,
I pause, and then upward look,
And say to myself: Perhaps—who knows—
That's a hint from Culverbrook.





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